

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.—1809-1865.

BY OLIVE K. DANA.

## A PROGRAMME FOR THE TWELFTH OF FEBRUARY.

[A bust of Lincoln should be seen at the front of the platform, with a small copy of the emancipation group. Indeed, a number of such casts or scripture may perhaps be borrowed for the occasion, and they will add much to the interest of the exercises. One or more portraits should also be shown, with flags and evergreens.]

Singing.—"The Battle Hymn of the Republic."

In many of the cities of our country the visitor will see, in bronze or marble, the similitude of one striking figure. It is that of a tall, gaunt man, with rugged and care-lined features, conspicuously plain and unpretentious. But there is a singular dignity in the commanding figure, and the seamed countenance is irradiated by a benign purpose, the nobility of which, and the profound satisfaction of it, overmaster even the sadness of his eyes. And, whatever the act or attitude in which he is represented,—whether bending over the slave unmanacled at his feet, or laying down the pen whose stroke had given him that freedom,—the same inherent nobility stamps every presentation of the familiar form and face.

We can never tell the story of our nation's growth and transformation and leave out his part in it; and we cannot speak of typical American manhood and patriotism and not first remember him.—Abraham Lincoln, "the supreme example of our history." He stands midway of our national history, as Washington stood at its beginning—with the same innate authority, the same perception of the nation's destiny and of its peril, the same unwavering fidelity to noble, patriotic ideals, and with a devotion even more consummate.

2. Recitation—"On the Lite-Mask of Abraham Lincoln." R. W. Gilder.

In his story the romances of possible achievement and the never-lessening, ever-new opportunities of patriotic service in our republic are written large,—in characters, indeed, which the chid must spell, in words the mind must interpret, and in lines which, however familiar, the youth may thrill and decline. To this plain millions of common men owe their relationship, and their manhood itself. While other millions, whom money may yet number, over and over, a debt not less great—the perpetuity of the nation, and the effacing from its scutcheon of a permitted wrong.

None else of all the sons who have guided her, have discerned so nobly her own intent and opportunity. The aims of her founders, the convictions of the men who declared her liberties and shaped her constitution, the profound and unifying purpose which makes her story and her destiny what they are to her citizens and to the world, have hardly been grasped so thoroughly by any other. Certainly, no other has interpreted them in terms so unshakable.

These achievements and this service had their origins in beginnings almost primordial in their simplicity. His biography is the romance of our later history, as his influence, it is well said, seems like its providence.

4. Recitation—Canto VI. of Lowell's "Commemoration Ode."

5. His Story.—In the most primitive of backwoods dwellings, on a lonely farm in a Kentucky clearing, Abraham Lincoln was born on the twelfth of February, 1809. This hovel was his home for the first seven years of his life, and then his father, Thomas Lincoln, moved his family to Indiana, where, with the help of the boy and his mother, another cabin was built, walled in on three sides, and with the fourth, in winter, hung with skins, to keep out the cold and possible intruders. This, in time, gave place to another with four walls, and with furniture hewn rudely enough, and with no axe-strokes to spare, from the trees of the forest around them. Here, a year later, when he was nine years old, his mother died, and, lonely and neglected, the boy and his sister shivered in the cheerless cabin, or, in summer, roamed the woods like little savages, uncared for and uncomforable. But by and by a new mother came—an energetic, capable, an intelligent and kindly woman, who brought all manner of homely comforts into the dreary house.

To Abraham, especially, her sway in the household meant a new era, and a lasting one. She gave him comfort and sympathy, and she insisted on a measure of schooling, though even she could not secure for him, under the circumstances, more than a meagre allowance. This, however, paved the way for better things, for he soon discovered that he could be his own schoolmaster—a fact he never lost sight of his lifetime through.

6. He was a tall and vigorous lad, and his later boyhood was spent in work on his father's farm and those of

[Stamps of Lincoln may be obtained of the New England Publishing Company, 3 Somerset street, Boston. Price, two cents each.]

his neighbors in hewing logs, chopping wood, driving teams, and tending store; and, especially, in learning all the few books to be obtained in the neighborhood, or that interceded with the settlers themselves, now fast becoming more numerous and intelligent, could teach him. His own efforts at self-improvement were unwearying. The wooden fire-shovel—which could be planked off at need, or replaced by another,—served for slate and blackboard. On it, too, he wrote his first compositions,—committting them to paper if any came in his way, although the supply was always scanty; he was usually obliged to condense severely to make his pages hold what he had to say. He discovered that he could make rude speeches, also, and he had, besides, a fund of humor, as well as of kindness, and a talent for mimicry which made him everywhere a favorite. He seems to have had at this time a dim consciousness of powers and aptitudes out of the common, and he was regarded by his associates as a clever young man. But his scanty opportunities, the menial tasks, employment by which he was forced to support himself, his rustic speech and coarse clothing,—which remained for a long time of primitive simplicity,—and his natural uncoateness, obscured for a long time both his unusual abilities and the native force of his character and aspirations.

When he was twenty-one his father moved again, this time to Illinois, the state with which his son's fame is most closely connected. Here, not far from Springfield, "Abie," as he was still called, having driven thither an ox team with the household goods, helped build another log cabin, and then, to clear the clearing, split the rails which were long since become history by their connection with his career.

7. Recitation—"Abraham Lincoln," Alice Cary. (Begin with third stanza.)

8. He was now twenty-one, and had begun life for himself. He had had in all only about a year's schooling, had read only such books as he could pick up from time to time, and had associated almost wholly with illiterate people. But it was at this time that he went to New Orleans, where to gain education,—a sight which he never forgot, and which gave him his first impression of the grandeur of a great city. Daily in the streets he studied himself a candidate for the general assembly of Illinois, making the acquaintance, and setting forth his views, in a handbill he had prepared himself, sufficiently explicit and well-worded. In the interval before election the Black Hawk war broke out, and Lincoln went as captain of a company from Sangamon. On his return he was defeated at the polls, though the support he received was gratifying to him.

A little before this he had borrowed a grammar, and had mastered it. A lawyer loaned him a copy of Blackstone, and he studied it diligently, and to such good purpose that we soon find him engaged with petty cases, usually with out fees. His occupations for a long time were various and unremunerative. He was for a long time harassed with debt, and seemed to make little progress. But he was steadily gaining, nevertheless, both in his own resources and in popular esteem. In 1834 he was sent to the assembly, or state legislature, of which he was a member for six years following, and where, in a memorable protest, joined by only one other member, he recorded his conviction that he believed "the institution of slavery to be founded on both injustice and God's curse."

9. He was now a successful lawyer, with an honorable place in his profession and in the society of Springfield; it was well known that he would defend no person whom he did not believe to be innocent, nor take a case unless he was persuaded that the right of it was on his side. With this conviction, he would often produce a remarkable impression. His words were of proverbial weight with a jury. He was highly esteemed throughout his own state, and for three years, beginning with 1836, he represented his own district in the national congress.

Here he was able, on two or three occasions, to give memorable expression to his anti-slavery convictions, but when he relinquished his seat, in 1840, he almost despaired of ever seeing the day when the people would themselves espouse the cause he had at heart, and especially when he could himself render any service to it. That time, nevertheless, was not so far distant as he believed. Nine years later, in the campaign of 1858, he found himself the chief champion of the cause of the slave in a series of joint debates with Stephen Douglas, then senator from Illinois. Lincoln was made the opposing candidate, and the issue hinged upon the supremacy of the slave-holding or of the free states. The campaign was a warm one, and Lincoln lost the election. He gained, however, some things far outweigh the winning,—the following of the anti-slavery party, and a growing influence with all loyal upholders of the states' knowledge of the public mind, and a prestige among the Northern leaders and the more thoughtful men in all sections, which made him, a year later, a presidential candidate, and then our president, at

a great crisis in our country's history. It was well for the nation that it had chosen for its ruler a man of so strong a sense of right and justice, of a patience and sympathy so profound, of a patriotism so pure, and with so profound a sense of human dependence and the need of divine direction.

10. Recitation—Lincoln's farewell address at Springfield.

11. Extracts from Lincoln's first inaugural.

12.—Singing—"Speed Our Republic."

13. During the first administration of President Lincoln, and, indeed, to the close of his life, one of the most noteworthy things about him was the hold he had on the sympathy of the common people. It was very soon evident that he had won their hearts, and to the end he retained their confidence. It was this, more than all else, which gave him authority, and manifested strength, and material resources. He had counselors, chosen with rare wisdom; geniuses of acknowledged skill and daring. The North discovered, too, her resources, and learned to use them.

But it was because the root and file of loyal men,—of those of whom he said, "God must have loved the common people, he made so many of them," relied so completely on his integrity, his wisdom, his prudence and foresight, and upon his ruling sympathy and patience, that he was able to lead them and their cause to final victory. And these qualities, also, when the war was done, helped to make possible that speedy acceptance of its decision and that loyalty to the principles it established which are almost unique in the history of nations.

14. Recitation—"Our Good Predecester," Phoebe Cary.

15. Abraham Lincoln believed in the American union.

He was willing to make any sacrifice for its purification and preservation. He made all men see its possibilities as he himself saw them, and he inspired them with his own confidence in its ultimate triumph and larger destiny. To this deep conviction of his, since become, in good measure, our common inheritance, he nowhere gave clearer or more convincing expression than in his speech at the dedication of the national cemetery at Gettysburg, November 19, 1863.

Reading—"Lincoln's Address at Gettysburg."

16. Recitation—"To the Spirit of Abraham Lincoln." (Re-union at Gettysburg twenty-five years after the battle.) E. W. Gilder.

17. Abraham Lincoln had faith in the union because he believed, profoundly, with a confidence which no peril or defeat could shake, in the principles for which it stood and on which it had been founded. New conditions and events unforeseen had doubtless obscured them for many, but to him they were always plain, and in every choice of his their influence was dominant. It was at the beginning of the Lincoln-Douglas debates in 1858 that some of his friends remonstrated with him for a certain explicit and memorable statement he had made regarding slavery, and of the danger of its retention within our borders. But the pith of expediency had no weight with him. "It is true," he said, "and I will deliver it as written. . . . I would rather be defeated with these expressions in my speech held up and discussed before the people than be victorious without them." And, a little later, he closed a significant address with these memorable words, which suggest the principle by which he shaped his actions, and which furnish, indeed, the key to his whole life:

"Neither let us be slandered from our duty by false accusations against us, nor frightened from it by menaces of destruction to the government or to danger to ourselves. . . . Let us have faith that right makes might, and, in that faith, let us, to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it."

18. Recitation—"The Emancipation Group," Whittier.

19. Singing—"America."

## SUBJECTS FOR ESSAYS.

Abraham Lincoln's Boyhood.  
Lincoln and His Time.  
President Lincoln and the Soldier.  
The War Cabinet.  
Abraham Lincoln and the Declaration of Independence.

## FOR SHAKESPEARE STUDENTS.

BY AUGUSTINE L. CAMP.

In what plays or plays occur,—

- (a) children? (i) prayers?
- (b) wooing scenes? (j) practical jokes?
- (c) confessions? (k) feasts?
- (d) burial scenes? (l) betrothals?
- (e) pastoral scenes? (n) conspiracies?
- (f) athletic sports? (o) challenges to duels?
- (g) songs? (p) weddings?
- (h) tête-à-tête scenes? (q) murders?

